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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

Continuing "The Elementary School Teacher"

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Educational News and Editorial Comment

BOARDS OF EDUCATION, STATE BODIES

It will be remembered that attention was called some months ago to the controversy in New York City between the city hall and the board of education. The following letter from Mr. Finegan, who has just left the office of Deputy Commissioner of Education of the state of New York to become head of the school system of Pennsylvania, points out the significant court decisions on the matters thus brought up. The letter is of very great interest in view of the iteration which it gives to the important principle that a school is a state institution, not a local body related to the city hall.

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Our city school law of 1917 went a long distance toward obtaining that independence which a board of education should have in the performance of its official duties. The state-wide salary law of 1919 completes the work pretty effectively. Under the terms of that law, the board of education of each city is given the specific authority to fix the salary of each teacher and of every other employee in the school system.

In addition to these acts, we have just had two court decisions of great importance in this state. The Appellate Division recently held that the provisions of the city school law take precedence in every particular over a provision written in the city charter, and now comes a decision from the Appellate Division, in the New York Department, to the effect that the mayor is without authority or jurisdiction to direct his Commissioner of Accounts to investigate the board of education or to examine the auditor of that board. The decision is based upon the theory that a board of education is not a city board, that the functions of the board are not city functions, and that the authority of the mayor and his Commissioner of Accounts extends to city affairs and city officials only. It is a very clean-cut, sweeping opinion.

PROFESSIONAL ISOLATION

A principal of a Chicago school was recently discussing the method of developing educational reform within this system. He said:

It can be done only from within. Chicago principals will not have an outsider coming in. It isn't our way. Chadsey was all right personally. He knew his business and he was full of ideas, but it was no use. The men in the principals' club can be reached only by somebody on the inside.

A state official from one of the leading states in the Union was commenting on recent doings in Chicago and said:

The men of our state are prepared to fight from the floor, if necessary, any move to bring the Department of Superintendence to Chicago for its meetings at any time in the future. It isn't the board of education especially; that has been what it has been for years. But now the school people have shown what they are and they are likely to be left alone for some time to come. The rest of the country doesn't care to see one of its best men handled the way Chadsey was.

The desire to associate with insiders only is therefore likely to be fully satisfied. To the thinking of the present writer this is a pitiful situation. The Chicago system has festered for years. Teachers have fought boards; boards have fought their own appointees, the superintendents; district superintendents are afraid of principals; principals are afraid of their teachers. Solidly, they all unite against one thing—the importation of a strong man from outside. In the meantime does anyone ever come to the Chicago

schools for educational ideas? Is there being worked out here a model of self-criticism or self-improvement? Is intellectual leadership of the Mississippi Valley centering here in its metropolis? The answer is all too evident. The isolation grows and with it the evils of narrow exclusiveness. There are very few small cities on this continent which would tolerate the crude, antique, and broken-down system of so-called budgeting under which Chicago tries to carry on its schools. There is no adequate digest of even the most essential educational statistics of this city. There is absolute disregard of the first principles of modern professional training in the appointments made at headquarters and in what follows these appointments. Supervision throughout the system is woefully deficient. Political influence runs rampant in every quarter. There is nothing to promise a break in the circling around and around and around. Such is the fate that comes to a system bent on having no influences introduced from outside.

TEACHERS' COUNCILS

School systems have been slow to organize themselves on a democratic plan. Boards of education and superintendents have for the most part failed to see the importance of taking teachers into the government of the schools. Now the omissions of the past are leading to forms of organization in which teachers are asserting their rights and demanding a voice in the management of affairs. The spirit of these demands is not always wholesome. There is in some of the teachers' organizations a lack of feeling of responsibility which is easy to understand but which will have to be overcome if teachers' participation in school government is to be productive of good to the schools. It will not do for the teachers to make demands of the government and at the same time ask to become part of the government unless they are prepared to face its problems with wisdom and with a willingness to abide by practical adjustments.

Is it not time for schools to adopt the policy of trusting teachers with larger responsibilities and of demanding of them more intelligent and carefully considered solutions of school problems? Teachers have a right to ask for higher salaries, but they must become students of public taxation. Teachers want permanence of tenure. They must study the effects of such tenure on efficiency and must provide adequate guaranties of efficiency when the lash of possible dismissal has been dropped.

The kind of move which can be made at once in every school system in the direction of democratic distribution of power and responsibility was outlined in the *School Review* of October, 1918, by Superintendent Spaulding and is represented by the Teacher's Council of New York.

The constitution of the New York Council describes the organization and purposes of that body as follows:

- I. The organization shall be known as the Teachers' Council.
- II. The Teachers' Council shall have a twofold function:
 1. The furnishing of information and the opinions of the teaching staff (principals and teachers) upon questions submitted by the Board of Education or by the Board of Superintendents.
 2. The introduction of recommendations concerning any of the problems affecting the welfare of the schools and the teaching staff.
- All final decisions shall be left to the Board of Education or the Board of Superintendents.
- III. The Teachers' Council shall be allowed absolute freedom in its debates and deliberations.
- IV. The Teachers' Council shall be composed of forty-five [45] representatives from such voluntary teachers' organizations as were in existence March 1, 1913, and of such other teachers' organizations as may thereafter be recognized by the Board of Education.

The by-laws give an idea of the range of the Council's activities in the list of standing committees which they present as follows:

- a) An Executive Committee.
- b) A Committee on Courses of Study, Syllabuses, and Programs.
- c) A Committee on School Records and Statistics.
- d) A Committee on Truancy and Delinquency.
- e) A Committee on Vocational Interests.
- f) A Committee on the Advancement of Pupils.
- g) A Committee on Organization and Administration.
- h) A Committee on Special Schools and Classes.
- i) A Committee on Evening Schools and Recreation Centres.
- j) A Committee on Professional Interests.
- k) A Committee on Parents' Associations and Community Needs.

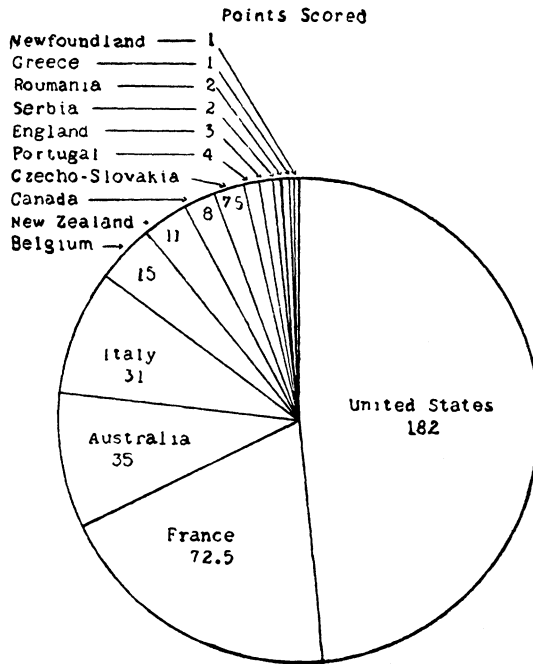
THE PHYSICAL AMERICAN

So much has been said about the revelations of the war regarding the need of more physical education in America that it is refreshing to get official and very decisive evidence on the side not usually stressed. The following information prepared by that well-known compiler of educational statistics, Leonard P. Ayres, comes from his office in the War Department where he is a Colonel in the General Staff and Chief of the Statistics Branch.

I am sending you with this some data showing the results of the Inter-Allied games between the athletes of the different armies in France.

The data have a bearing on our discussion as to whether or not there was evidence showing that the American troops were physically better than those of the other armies.

It is also worth noting that in the marksmanship contest the Americans won all the events, and in the individual rifle shooting they took the eighteen first places, and in the individual pistol shooting they took the eight first places.



RESULTS OF INTER-ALLIED GAMES

The following results of the Inter-Allied games held at the Pershing Stadium, Joinville-le-Pont, France, from June 22 to July 6 have been cabled by General Pershing. Seventeen nations were represented.

The United States won first place in baseball, basket ball, boxing, hand grenade throwing; shooting competitions; rifle individual, rifle teams, revolver individual, revolver teams; swimming competition; track and field; tug-of-war; wrestling. Second and third places won by the United States were not cabled.

France won first place in tennis singles, cross-country races, fencing, Rugby football, golf, modified Marathon, relay races Army of Occupation, rowing four-oared sculls; second place in soccer football, horse-riding competition, rifle and pistol teams, track and field, water polo; third place in boxing, rowing single scull.

Italy won first place in horse-riding competition; second place in fencing, basket ball, relay races Army of Occupation, broad jump. Australia won first place in tennis team match and doubles; second place in boxing, swimming. Belgium won first place in water polo; second place in cross country, wrestling, tug-of-war; third place in fencing. England won first place in rowing eight-oared sculls. New Zealand won first place in rowing single sculls; third place in four-oared and eight-oared sculls. Czecho-Slovakia won first place in soccer football; third place (tied) in wrestling.

DENTAL CLINIC IN RURAL DISTRICTS

The following report from the Department of Public Instruction of New Jersey describes a useful innovation which is worthy of imitation.

MOTOR DENTAL CLINIC FOR BURLINGTON COUNTY

A movement has been started in Burlington County to give dental service and teach oral hygiene to the children of the rural districts.

This is being done in a novel way. A motor dental ambulance, which was in the service of the United States Army during the war, has been purchased. This "movable dental office" is equipped with a modern standard dental chair and electric dental engine, the current for which is supplied by storage batteries. It has awnings and ventilators, has both gas and electricity for lighting, and carries its own water supply. Modern dentistry in all its branches is therefore possible.

The office can be moved from place to place without dismantling. It drives into the school yard and the dentist works during school hours.

Instruction is also given, in the classroom and during the work, in the care of the mouth, the teeth, and the general health.

The money necessary for this enterprise has been supplied by donations, obtained chiefly through the efforts of Miss Elva Hughes, county attendance officer.

This work was begun early in May and as much territory as possible has been covered during the last weeks of the school year. During one week the teeth of the children of three townships were examined and it was found that 90 per cent of the children so examined were in need of dental treatment.

Such a movement will not injure or antagonize the local dentist. When a child's teeth are examined a chart showing the attention needed is made in duplicate and one copy is sent to the parents. They can then, if they prefer, send the child to the regular family dentist. His business, therefore, will be increased rather than diminished, since this will not only add many children to his practice but will tend to educate the parents themselves to the need of dental care for adults as well as children.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

This will be a year of great difficulty in supplying schools with teachers. The withdrawals from the profession have been heavy for several years. The number of new teachers trained for the service, especially during the last twelve months, has been deplorably small. The competition for teachers will be so strong that the question is sure to be raised again and again of transfers and new contracts. Under circumstances of this kind it is doubly important that teachers be reminded that there is a professional code which binds them to their contracts in no less degree than the civil code binds boards of education. The Michigan State Teachers' Association received from its committee on professional code so clear a statement of the principles of action which should guide teachers that the following selected sections may be quoted:

2. A clear understanding of the law of contracts is incumbent upon a teacher. Since a teacher should scrupulously keep whatever agreement is made, he should refuse to sign a contract unjust and humiliating in form.

3. It is unprofessional for a teacher to sign a yearly contract to teach for a wage that is not sufficient to cover living expenses for twelve months.

4. It is unprofessional for a teacher to resign during the period for which engaged. He may rightly ask to be released, by giving notice of not less than two weeks, but must in case of refusal abide by his contract.

5. It is unprofessional for a teacher to underbid a rival in order to secure a position.

9. It is unprofessional for a superintendent or other school officer to offer a position to a teacher without first determining the willingness of the teacher's employer to grant a release.

10. It is highly unprofessional for a superintendent or other school officer to visit, with a view to employment, a candidate at work, without the permission of his or her superintendent.

11. It is unprofessional for a superintendent to refuse to aid as successful teacher in securing worthy promotion within his own or another school system.

NORMAL SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION OF VARIOUS TYPES

There is a strong tendency in some normal schools to expand in the direction of a general college education. So far as the present writer knows, the following case reported in the official publication of the Wisconsin State Board of Education is the first in which a normal school has devoted a part of its energy to engineering education. The case is described as follows:

The State Board of Education, having recently asked for a report on college courses in the normal schools with special reference to the engineering course at Milwaukee, the Educational Committee recommends that the Board of Regents

of Normal Schools transmit to the State Board of Education the figures appended hereto, comprising a study of the cost of instruction in said engineering course, together with the following expression of opinion relative to that work:

That the opportunity for this work in the shops and factories of Milwaukee is an educational opportunity that should not be ignored nor neglected; that the course as organized and conducted by the State Normal School at Milwaukee under the plan adopted by President Pearse constitutes the foundation for an educational structure that may and should be elaborated; that the cost of the work now being done, considering the newness of the course is reasonable.¹

The Board of Regents of Normal Schools has never outlined a definite policy relative to this course. President Pearse saw the educational opportunity in Milwaukee and in view of the fact that no other institution seemed ready or desirous of taking advantage of the opportunity, the Board of Regents of Normal Schools acquiesced in the policy of the State Normal School at Milwaukee in establishing and conducting the engineering course.

The wisdom of expending funds appropriated by the state to train teachers for elementary schools for a purpose wholly foreign to elementary education may be called into question. Wisconsin, like every other state, is without an adequate supply of trained teachers. Indeed, the cry is long and loud from the state department in Madison for more teachers of any kind. Should not normal faculties then stick to their allotted task, using all the resources which the state can supply in the effort to meet the one aim for which their institutions were organized? There have been in recent years many discussions as to the rating of normal schools as colleges, and the facts have shown that these schools are in very large measure unstandardized. If now to college ambitions and to regular duties to the state are added professional courses organized without the ordinary safeguards of professional surroundings, what will become of both normal-school standards and engineering standards?

NATIONAL SOCIETY YEARBOOK

Co-operation is invited in the circular letter which has been sent out by a committee of the National Society for the Study of Education. Replies can be sent to the chairman or to any other member of the committee. The members of the committee are as follows: C. H. Judd, chairman; W. C. Bagley, J. C. Brown, C. E. Chadsey, L. D. Coffman, E. P. Cubberley, E. C. Elliott, H. C. Morrison, G. D. Strayer, and G. M. Whipple. Their letter is reproduced in full herewith:

A committee of the National Society for the Study of Education was organized last year and charged with the responsibility of making a report on new materials which can be used to enrich the curricula of elementary schools and

high schools. The committee is known as the Committee on Materials for Instruction. It plans to publish for the next meeting of the Society a Yearbook in which numerous examples will be presented of such new materials of instruction prepared by teachers in different parts of the country and not yet incorporated into the textbooks. Some teachers have worked out lessons in local geography or civics; some have worked out science problems; others have done something in history or in literature that is unique in its content. What is wanted is definite content material, not descriptive accounts of what was done.

This is not to be a Yearbook of hopes and ambitions, nor of general statements, but a Yearbook of actual material available for classroom use, with only so much descriptive material in each case as is necessary to tell how the material was made and employed. Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the fact that what is wanted is material usable in the schools. It is hoped that the Yearbook may serve as a stimulus to teachers and supervisory officers to work on the general problem of enriching the curriculum through co-operative effort.

The Yearbook must go to press on the fifteenth of November, 1919. That means that the material must be in the hands of the Committee before October thirty-first, 1919, if it is to be used.

COURSES IN RETAIL SALESMANSHIP

The Carnegie Institute of Technology has taken up the work of providing instruction for retail salesmanship as a major problem for next year. Professor Charters, well known for his writings on school methods and for his researches in grammar, is to be in charge of the work and will organize a department for the training of directors of schools for retail salesmen. He will also prepare the materials necessary for instruction along these lines.

The necessity of turning experts of the highest training to the task of preparing textbooks and material for instruction in practical courses is evidently coming to be recognized. It is a wholesome sign. The time was when those who would have trade training introduced in the schools thought of their tasks in very simple terms. All that seemed to them to be required was a school in which to operate and an experienced tradesman as a teacher. After much running to and fro and a great deal of waste, the obvious fact has come to the surface. Here, as in all forms of teaching, there must be material carefully arranged and methods of presentation expertly worked out. A new and promising chapter in courses in salesmanship has been opened.